Claims:

1. A method for operating a maritime unit (1) that is especially intended for offshore operations, such as a jack-up type oil drilling unit, a liftboat type offshore vessel and/or the like, said maritime unit comprising a frame structure (2), which is provided with at least power production and/or drive assemblies for the maritime unit, and at least three legs (3) operated by a jack mechanism (5), on the one hand for steadying the maritime unit (1) on the seabed by driving the legs (3) from a standby position, as required by the maritime unit's shipping condition, downwards in a direction substantially vertical with respect to the frame structure (2) and, on the other hand, for releasing the same from the seabed by driving the legs (3) upward relative to the frame structure, wherein the legs (3) of the maritime unit (1) are operated on a so-called disk brake principle for enabling a substantially stepless drive therefor, particularly regarding the manipulation and locking thereof, **characterized** in that the maritime unit has its leg (3) first of all actuated by means of a brake disk system (3a), which includes one or more brake flanges (3a'), extending longitudinally of the leg and, on the other hand, by means of a brake system (5a), mounted in connection with the maritime unit's frame structure (2) and including at least two brake shoe elements (5a'), being set one below the other in a vertical direction, whereby said shoe elements (5a') apply their action on the same brake flange (3a') of the brake disk system (3a) and are operated in the vertical direction by means of separate jack mechanisms (5; 5'), such as hydraulic cylinders or the like.

2. A method as set forth in claim 1, **characterized** in that the maritime unit has each of its legs (3) actuated in a substantially stepless manner by using alternately two or more brake shoe elements (5a') applying their action on a single brake flange (3a') in a brake disk system (3a), such that during an operation (x), involving one appropriately movable brake shoe element pressing into engagement with the brake flange (3a'), one or more movable brake shoe elements presently in a rest position are being returned (y) relative to the brake flange (3a') to a standby position in anticipation of the next operation.

3. A method as set forth in claim 1 or 2, **characterized** in that the movement of each leg (3) is further controlled by means of one or more immobile brake shoe elements (5a") mounted in connection with the frame structure (2).

4. A method as set forth in any of the preceding claims 1-3, **characterized** in that the maritime unit (1) has one or more of its immobile and/or mobile brake shoe elements (5a', 5a") first of all pressed in a standby condition in a self-powered, such as spring-biased manner, into engagement with the brake disk system (3a) and, on the other hand, has the same disengaged therefrom in an operating condition in response to an auxiliary force, such as by the action of a hydraulically operating release mechanism.

5. A maritime unit (1), especially intended for offshore operations, such as a jack-up type oil drilling unit, a liftboat type offshore vessel, and/or

the like, comprising a frame structure (2), which is provided with at least power production and/or drive assemblies for the maritime unit, and at least three legs (3) operated by a jack mechanism (5), on the one hand for steadying the maritime unit (1) on the seabed by driving the legs (3) from a standby position, as required by the maritime unit's shipping condition, downwards in a direction substantially vertical with respect to the frame structure (2) and, on the other hand, for releasing the same from the seabed by driving the legs (3) upward relative to the frame structure, wherein the legs (3) of the maritime unit (1) are adapted in a per se known manner to be operated on a so-called disk brake principle for enabling a substantially stepless drive therefor, particularly regarding the manipulation and locking thereof, **characterized** in that the maritime unit has its leg (3) provided with a brake disk system (3a), which includes one or more brake flanges (3a'), extending longitudinally of the leg, and, on the other hand, the maritime unit has its frame structure (2) provided with a brake system (5a), which includes at least two brake shoe elements (5a'), being set one below the other in a vertical direction, whereby said shoe elements (5a') apply their action on the same brake flange (3a') of the brake disk system (3a) and are operated in the vertical direction by separate jack mechanisms (5; 5'), such as hydraulic cylinders or the like.

6. A maritime unit as set forth in claim 5, **characterized** in that the brake shoe system (5a) includes one or more brake shoe elements (5a") fixedly mounted on the frame structure (2) of the

maritime unit (1), especially for controlling the movement of each leg 3 of the maritime unit.

7. A maritime unit as set forth in claim 5 or 6, **characterized** in that the maritime unit (1) has one or more of its immobile and/or mobile brake shoe elements (5a', 5a") further adapted, first of all, to press in a standby condition in a self-powered, such as spring-biased manner, into engagement with the brake disk system (3a) and, on the other hand, to disengage therefrom in an operating condition in response to an auxiliary force, such as by the action of a hydraulically operating release mechanism.

8. A maritime unit as set forth in any of the preceding claim 5-7, **characterized** in that the brake disk system (3a), provided on each leg of the maritime unit symmetrically in a cross-sectional view, is adapted to be lightened/cooled by using e.g. perforated, hollow and/or the like brake flanges (3a').